IN THE CLAIMS

In this Response, Claims 1, 2 and 29-32 have been amended.

1. (currently amended) An apparatus to support a stent during a process of coating the stent with a coating substance, comprising a member configured to support a stent, the member including a plurality of pores disposed on a surface of the member, the pores capable of receiving a coating substance during a coating process, wherein the pores have an open end and a closed end so as to provide a closed pore system on the surface of the member.

2. (currently amended) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the pores have a diameter ~~between~~from about 0.2 microns ~~and~~to about 50 microns.

Claim 3 (canceled).

4. (previously presented) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the member is made from a metallic material.

5. (previously presented) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the member is made from a polymeric material.

6. (previously presented) The apparatus of Claim 5, wherein the polymeric material is selected from the group consisting of regenerated cellulose, cellulose acetate, polyacetal, polyetheretherketone, polyesters, highly hydrolyzed polyvinyl alcohol, nylon, polyphenylenesulfide, polyethylene, polyethylene terephthalate, polypropylene, and combinations thereof.

7. (previously presented) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the member is made from a ceramic material.

Claims 8-24 (canceled).

25. (previously presented) The apparatus of Claim 4, wherein the metallic material is selected from the group consisting of stainless steel, titanium, tantalum, niobium, zirconium, hafnium, and cobalt chromium alloys.

26. (previously presented) The apparatus of Claim 7, wherein the ceramic material is selected from the group consisting of zirconia, silica, glass, sintered calcium phosphates, calcium sulfate, and titanium dioxide.

27. (previously presented) A mounting assembly to support a stent during the application of a coating composition onto the stent, comprising a first element to make contact with one side of a stent, and a second element to make contact with another side of the stent, wherein the first or second element includes a layer to absorb a coating composition that comes into contact with the layer during an application process.

28. (previously presented) The mounting assembly of Claim 27, wherein the layer is a sponge.

29. (currently amended) ~~A support assembly to support a stent during a process of coating the stent with a composition, comprising a member to support a stent, wherein the member includes an absorbing layer disposed on the surface of the member for at least partially absorbing some of the composition that comes into contact with the absorbing layer~~The mounting assembly of Claim 27, wherein the first or second element is made from a metallic material, a polymeric material or a ceramic material.

30. (currently amended) ~~A support assembly to support a stent during a process of coating the stent with a composition, comprising a member to support a stent, wherein the member is made from an absorbent material for at least partially absorbing some of the composition that comes into contact with the member~~The mounting assembly of Claim 27, wherein the first or second element has a conical shape.

31. (currently amended) A support assembly to support a stent during a process of coating the stent with a composition, comprising a first ~~member~~element to make contact with one side of a stent, and a second element to make contact with another side of the stent, wherein the ~~member~~first or second element includes an absorbing layer disposed on the surface of the ~~member~~first or second element for at least partially absorbing some of the composition that comes into contact with the absorbing layer.

32. (currently amended) A support assembly to support a stent during a process of coating the stent with a composition, comprising a first ~~member~~element to make contact with one side of a stent, and a second element to make contact with another side of the stent, wherein the ~~member~~first or second element is made from an absorbent material for at least partially absorbing some of the composition that comes into contact with the ~~member~~first or second element.